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THE

WAY OF SALVATION;

A

SERMON

DELIVERED

AT

MORRIS-TOWN, NEW JERSEY,

FEBRUARY 8, 1829.

BY ALBERT BARNES.

MORRIS-TOWN, NEW-JERSEY.
PRINTED BY JACOB MANN.

1830.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Discourse was prepared as a part of the weekly pastoral duties of the Author, and delivered in the midst of a very extensive Revival of Religion. Many were rejoicing in hope of the glory of God; and multitudes were enquiring what they should do to be saved. It occurred that it might be of use to bring together, in a single discourse, the leading doctrines of the Bible respecting God's way of saving men. It was felt that the time of great religious excitement was a period peculiarly favorable for fixing in the minds of multitudes a permanent impression of the system of revealed truth. Such an exhibition, according to the views with which the Author is accustomed to interpret the Scriptures, was attempted in this discourse. Under the inexpressible pressure on the spirit of a minister of God at such seasons, it was penned and delivered.—It is now printed at the suggestion, and chiefly at the expense of a few friends, simply with the hope of giving a more fixed impression of the views then expressed.

The original plan of the discourse, of necessity, precluded extensive discussion. A few references, with a few notes on the most important topics presented, are now added.—The sermon makes no pretensions to any new or original views. It is supposed to be nothing more than is indicated by its title—an outline of the way of salvation by the Gospel. Such, it is *hoped*, it will be found to be.

One thing has been established, in the Author's view, by the delivery of this discourse, as well as by a very frequent and full, but temperate, exhibition of the leading doctrines presented in it—*that injury is* NOT *done in a revival by a full exhibition of God's plan of saving men according to his sovereign will and pleasure.* No doctrine during the revival in this place has been more fully presented, than that God is a SOVEREIGN in the dispensation of his favors;—that the sinner has on him no claim;—that he is wholly dependent for mercy;—and that if God interpose not, he *must die.*—At the same time, the truth has been as uniformly presented, that the obligation of the sinner is not measured by the favors he hopes to obtain. The duty of an immediate and unqualified surrender into his hands—of a direct and eternal renunciation of all acts of rebellion—of an instantaneous submission to all the terms and requirements of the Gospel, and of an entire committing of all the interests of the soul to the hands of the God long hated, and of the Redeemer long set at nought and contemned, has been urged with all the ability that has been vouchsafed. By the Divine blessing on this united presentation of the doctrines of grace, and of man's obligation, so far as the Author of this discourse has had opportunity of knowing, most happy results have followed. The convicted sinner has felt the necessity of casting himself on the mercy of God, to be saved or lost at his will. Doing this, peace has followed; the burden of sin has been removed, and the blessings of redemption have distilled upon the spirit like the dews of the morning.

Morris-Town, Dec. 26, 1829.

Gift
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THE WAY OF SALVATION.

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Titus, iii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

All men have some scheme of salvation. Except the very few cases where individuals are thrown into a state of despair, there are none who do not expect to be happy beyond the grave. The proof of this is found in the composure with which most men look at eternity; and in their indifference when warned of a coming judgment. It requires the utmost strength of human hardihood, when a criminal looks without trembling of limbs on the gibbet where he is soon to be executed; and we infer, that there is no hardihood so great, no courage so strong, as to look upon eternal sorrow with a belief that it will be *ours*, and be unmoved. When we see, therefore, so many unconcerned about their eternal state; so many professing to believe that they are exposed to endless suffering, and still unanxious about it; the fair conclusion is, that not one syllable of the book that teaches this is truly believed. It is not, cannot be, human nature, to believe this, and still sit in indifference. Every man, therefore, has some secret scheme by which

he expects to be saved. Yet it is perfectly clear that there can be but one scheme of Salvation that is true. If the christian plan is *true*, then all others are *false*. If others are true, then there was no need of the sacrifice on the cross, and the scheme is an imposition. The admission then—an admission which probably all the sinners that I address would readily make—the admission that the christian religion is true, is a condemnation of all other systems, and shuts out all who are not interested in the plan of the gospel, from all hope of heaven.

The text contains the substance of the whole christian scheme. It expresses, I believe, every point that is peculiar to Christianity. It may be regarded as one of those condensing paragraphs, or summaries of the scheme, expressing all that is original in the plan in few words, in which the sacred writers seem to delight. It brings together distant doctrines—scattered rays of light, to be surveyed in the near neighborhood of each other, and to set off each other by the reflected light thrown from one point of view to another.

It is not often that a subject so extensive as the whole Christian plan of saving men, is introduced into the pulpit, with a view of giving its great points in a single discourse. I endeavor, from week to week, to explain particular parts of it, and to press its prominent doctrines and duties on your attention. It has occurred, that in the state of things now existing in this congregation, there is demanded a full, single view of God's way of saving men. Such a view, according to the interpretation which we give to the Bible, I wish this morning to present. If a demand somewhat more than usual should be made on your attention, it will be remembered, I trust, that it is difficult to give even an outline of the christian religion in a single discourse; and perhaps it will be deemed hazardous to have at-

tempted it. Let me further premise, that I shall be indebted very much to your own knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures for the proofs of the particular points which I shall consider. I foresee that it will demand no ordinary degree of attention on the part of my hearers to obtain, and do justice to the views which I shall present,—perhaps no ordinary candor to necessary obscurity of statement, and barrenness of illustration. *For the views themselves*, if fairly understood, I ask no indulgence. They are the views, if I mistake not, of God; and I am bound only to present them with fairness, and you to receive them into good and honest hearts.

What, then, is God's plan of saving men? What are the great leading points on which that plan is based, and to bring out which, is the design of the Bible? These are the questions which it is my wish, in few words, to answer. It will be seen at once, that the text ascribes all the honor to God, and none to men. It will be the design in this discourse, honestly, in this respect, to follow the representation of the text. Sinners and saints, people and preacher, may expect from this plan an unqualified condemnation, and a pressing claim to lay aside all their own honor, and to ascribe all glory to God.

I remark then, in the first place, that God's plan of saving men is based on the fact that the race is destitute of holiness. So says the text. Not by works of righteousness which *we* have done. If it were not so, there would have been no necessity for the scheme. Men would have possessed full capability of saving themselves. If men, before or since the promulgation of this plan of mercy, had any of the elements of holiness; or any traits of character, which could, by culture, be wrought into a texture of righteousness, then the design of interposition in this manner would have been a work

unnecessary, and would not have been done at all. The design of interposing to save mankind, supposed that in themselves they were lost and must be ruined, if left to their own guidance.

In the explanation of this position, it is important to be understood. It is not asserted by the friends of the christian religion that all men are as bad as they can be; or that one man is as bad as another; or that there is no morality—no parental or filial affection—no kindness or compassion in the world—no love of truth, and no honest dealing among men. The friends of religion are not blind to the existence of these qualities in a high degree; nor are they slow to value them, or to render them appropriate honors. They suppose that the Bible presents the fact, that all these things may exist, and diffuse a charm over society, and cement the body politic, and still there be an utter destitution of right feeling toward God. They suppose that natural amiableness is no proof that a man is not selfish; that because a child loves its parent, it is no evidence that the child has any regard to God; and that it is possible that a man may be very kind to the poor, and very just in his dealings, and still have a heart full of pride, and selfishness, and envy, and be an entire neglector of God in the feelings of his soul, and in regard to prayer, and to every act that expresses homage to the Deity. Christianity does not charge on men crimes of which they are not guilty. It does not say, as I suppose, that the sinner is held to be personally answerable for the transgressions of Adam, or of any other man;*

* It is not denied that this language varies from the statements which are often made on the subject, and from the opinion which has been entertained by many men. And it is admitted that it does not accord with that used on the same subject in the Confession of Faith, and in other standards of doctrine. The main difference is, that it is difficult to affix any clear and definite meaning to the expression, "we sinned *in* him, and fell *with* him." It is manifest, so

or that God has given a law which man has no power to obey. Such a charge, and such a requirement, would be most clearly unjust. The law requiring love to God, supreme and unqualified, and love to man, is supposed to be equitable; fully within the reach of every mortal, if there was first a willing mind. Every man is supposed to be under obligation perfectly, and for ever, to obey that law; be he in heaven, earth, or hell,—be he a king on the throne, or a beggar in the streets,—be he a bondman or a freeman.

What then is *the fact* on which the plan of mercy is based? It is simply, that all men have failed to yield obedience to the requirements of this reasonable law—that there is not an individual that has given evidence that he has not been its violator.—The violation of this pure law is held to be the first act of the child when he becomes a moral agent; the continued act of his life, unless he is renewed;

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far as it is capable of interpretation, that it is intended to convey the idea, not that the sin of Adam is *imputed* to us, or set over to our account; but that there was a *personal identity* constituted between Adam and his posterity, so that it was really *our act*, and *ours only*, after all that is chargeable on us. This was the idea of Edwards.—The notion of *imputing* sin, is an invention of modern times: it is not, it is believed, the doctrine of the confession of faith.—The Author of this discourse intended in the Sermon only to state what he conceived to be the doctrine of the Bible. Christianity affirms the fact, that in connection with the sin of Adam, or as a result, all moral agents in this world will sin—and sinning, will die. Rom. v. 12—19. It does not affirm, however, any thing about the *mode* in which this would be done. There are many ways conceivable in which that sin might secure the result, as there are many ways in which all similar *facts* may be explained. The drunkard commonly secures as a result, the fact that his family will be beggared, illiterate, perhaps profane or intemperate. Both facts are evidently to be explained on the *same principle* as a part of moral Government. The Bible does not, it is believed, affirm that there is any principle of moral government in the one case that is not in the other. Neither the facts, nor any proper inferences from the facts, affirm that I am, in either case, *personally responsible* for what another man did before I had an existence.

and the last act on his dying pillow. His whole career is set down as one act of rebellion, because he neglects God, is selfish, is proud, is cherishing enmity against his Maker, is opposed to the acts of his government, and is unfriendly to all the efforts made to produce better feelings. In innumerable instances this want of holiness, this destitution of love to God and man, goes forth in acts of falsehood, impurity, blasphemy, theft, murder, unkind feelings, and implacable individual and national war.—In support of this presentation of the character of men, the sacred scriptures assert the naked fact, claiming to be the testimony of God.* Christianity has moreover recorded the history of the world, under inspired guidance, for more than two-thirds of its continuance, and presents no exception to the melancholy account of men. Profane writers, with no reference to any theological debate, and nine-tenths of them with no expectation that their testimony would ever be adduced to settle questions in Divinity, have presented the same fact. Not one solitary historian, though coming from the midst of the people whose deeds are recorded, and designing to give the most favorable representation of their character, has exhibited a nation bearing any marks of holiness.† The world, the wide world is presented as apostate; and he must be worse than blind that would attempt to set up a defence of the conduct of men.

Christianity appeals to individuals. All who have been converted by its power, have given their decided testimony, to the darkest representations of the human heart, in the sacred record. Men, before, of all characters, the moral, and the vicious, have con-

* Rom. i. 21—32. iii. 10—19. v. 12. viii. 6, 7.—Gen. viii. 21.—Ps. xiv. 1—3.—Eph. ii. 1—3.—I. John, v, 19.—John iii. 1—6.

† The same is true of all testimony now. Dr. Ward affirms, after a residence of twenty-five years in India, that he had never known there *one moral man.*

curred in the representation that they were by nature the children of wrath, and that their hearts were enmity against God.

On this broad fact—wide as the world, and prolonged as its history—the christian scheme is based. Here is an apostate province of God's empire. Rebellion invaded it, not as it did the ranks of heaven. There it cut off a fixed number; all mature in wisdom and knowledge. It would not spread; it could not be extended to successive tribes. Here, it poisoned a fountain. It was amidst God's works, at first but a little spring, pouring into a rill, but soon swelling to creeks, to rivers, to lakes, to oceans. An incalculable number would descend from that first pair of apostates; and with prophetic certainty it could be foretold that not one of all their descendants would escape the contagion to the end of time, however long the apostate world might be suffered to roll amongst the orbs that preserved allegiance. To all ages it would be the same—rising, sinning, apostate, dying man. On each island, on each mountain, in each valley, in each cavern, wild or civilized, it would be the same. Crime would be heaped on crime;—whole nations would bleed;—whole soils be wet with gore;—whole tribes would wail;—and generation would tread on generation—and then themselves expire—and all die as enemies of the God that made them.

II. What could be done? What *was* done to arrest the evil?—I remark, secondly, that a plan of salvation was devised on the ground of this, sufficient for all;—a healing balm fitted to extend far as the spreading moral pestilence and death. This plan consisted in the selection and gift of the Son of God to die for the race, that a way of salvation might be opened for all. The Being thus selected was the co-equal of the Father—existing in intimate union with him, in perfect honor and happiness,

without derivation and without change, from all eternity. He was God.* This person of the Godhead became intimately and indissolubly united to human nature, in the person of Jesus the Son of Mary of Nazareth.† This union was such as to constitute the acts of the Divinity, and those of the humanity those of a person; in the same way as the acts of the mind, or the sufferings of our body, are the acts and sufferings of a person—of *ourselves*.—Thus united, this being possessing the divine and human nature in one person, became the mediator between God and man. In our nature the Son of God preached the good tidings of peace; exerted his power in healing the sick, and raising the dead; gave comfort to the desponding; supported the weak; traversed the vallies and ascended the mountains of Judea; founded a church and appointed its officers; predicted his own death, his resurrection, the destruction of the temple and holy city, and the certain universal spread of the Gospel. In human nature the Son of God expired on the cross. The divine nature suffered not, but it gave dignity and value to the sufferings of the man of Nazareth.

He died in the place of sinners.‡ He did not endure indeed the *penalty of the law*—for his sufferings were not eternal, nor did he endure remorse of conscience; but he endured so much suffering, bore so much agony, that the Father was pleased to accept of it in the place of the eternal torments of all that should by him be saved.§ "The atonement, of itself,

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* John i, 1—3. Rom. ix. 5. Heb. i, 8, 9. I. John v. 20. John xx. 28; v. 21—23. Matt. xi. 27. Rev. ii. 23. Heb. i. 3. Rev. xxii. 13. Acts vii. 59, 60.

† John i. 14. Luke i, 35. Rom. ix. 5. I. John i. 1.

‡ John i. 29. Eph. v. 2. I. John ii. 2; iv. 10. Isa. liii. 4. Rom. iii. 24, 25. II. Cor. v. 14. I. Peter ii. 24.

§ The *penalty of the law* is what God will inflict on its unredeemed violators—neither more nor less. The *result* therefore is the best interpretation of what was meant by the threatening, "Thou shalt die." Gen. ii, 17. Eze. xviii. 4, 20.—The *fact* turns out to be, that in that threatened death were included temporal pains and dying, remorse of conscience,

secured the salvation of no one."* It made it consistent for God to offer pardon to rebels. It so evinced the hatred of God against sin—so vindicated his justice—so asserted the honor of his law, that all his perfections would shine forth illustriously, if sinners through this work should be saved. The atonement secured the salvation of no one, except as God had promised his Son that he should see of the travail of his soul,† and except on the condition of repentance and faith.‡

In our nature the Son of God arose; gave proofs of his identity; and ascended to heaven to make intercession; to give repentance and remission of sins; and to conduct the affairs of the universe, with reference to the welfare of the church. He still lives to teach his people, to defend them in danger, to preserve his church from ruin.

This atonement was for all men. It was an offering made for the race. It had not respect so much to *individuals*, as to the *law* and *perfections of God.* It was an opening of the way for pardon—a making forgiveness consistent—a preserving of truth—a magnifying of the law; and had no particular reference to any class of men. We judge that he died for all. He tasted death for every man. He is the propitiation for the sins of the world. He came, that whosoever would believe on him should not perish, but have eternal life.§

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and direct eternal infliction of suffering in hell. Christ's sufferings were severe—more severe than those of any mortal before or since: but they bore, so far as we can see, only a very distant resemblance to the pains of hell—the proper penalty of the law. Nor is it possible to conceive that the sufferings of a few hours, however severe, could equal pains, though far less intense, eternally prolonged. Still less, that the sufferings of human nature in a single instance—for the Divine nature could not suffer—should be equal to the eternal pain of many millions.—It greatly confirms this view, when it is remembered, that no where in the whole Bible is there the semblance of a distinct affirmation that he endured the penalty of the law.

* Dr. Owen. † Isa. liii. 11.

‡ Mark xvi. 15, 16. Luke xiii. 3. Acts xvii. 30, 31.

§ II. Cor. v. 14, 15. I. John ii. 2. Heb. ii, 9. John iii. 16, 17; vi. 51. The intention was here, as in other parts of this Discourse, to give the

The full benefit of this atonement is offered to all men. In perfect sincerity God makes the offer. He has commissioned his servants to go and preach the Gospel—that is, the good news that salvation is provided for them—to every creature.* He that does not this; that goes to offer the Gospel to a part only; to elect persons only; or that supposes that God offers the Gospel only to a certain portion of mankind, violates his commission, practically charges God with insincerity, makes himself "wise above what is written," and brings great reproach on the holy cause of redemption. The offer of salvation is not made by *man*, but by *God*. It is *his* commission; and it is his solemn charge, that the sincere offer of heaven should be made to every creature. That all creatures have not heard it; that every heathen-man, every Indian, African, and Islander, have not heard it, has been owing to the unfaithfulness of ministers—to the avarice of the church—to the want of proper zeal among christians, and not to the command of God, or of any want of fulness in the atonement.

I assume the free and full offer of the Gospel to all men, to be one of those cardinal points of the system by which I *guage* all my other views of truth. It is, in my view, a corner-stone of the whole edifice; that which makes it so glorious to God, and

views of the Bible, without reference to any theological controversy.—The great principle on which the Author supposes the truths of religion are to he preached, and on which he endeavors to act, is, that the Bible is to be interpreted by all the honest helps within the reach of the preacher; and then proclaimed *as it is*—let it lead where it will, *within* or *without* the circumference of any arrangement of doctrines. He is supposed to be responsible not at all for its impinging on any theological system; nor is he to be cramped by any frame-work of faith that has been reared around the Bible. This doctrine was preached because, in the Author's view, the fair interpretation of the New Testament demanded it. He is happy in the belief, however, that in doing so he does not *in the least* depart from the standards of his own church. The doctrine *of limited atonement*—of the exclusive confinement of the work of Christ to any particular class of men in its original applicability, it is believed, is not to be found in the Presbyterian confession of faith.

* Mark xvi. 15, 16.

so full of good-will to men. I hold no doctrines—and by the grace of God never can hold any—which will be in *my* views inconsistent with the free and full offer of the Gospel to all men; or which will bind my hands, or palsy my tongue, or freeze my heart, when I stand before sinners to tell them of a dying Saviour. I stand as the messenger of God, with the assurance, that all that *will* may be saved; that the atonement was full and free; and that if any perish, it will be because they choose to die, and not because they are straitened in God. I have no fellow-feeling for any other Gospel; I have no right hand of fellowship to extend to any scheme that does not say that GOD sincerely offers all the bliss of Heaven to every guilty wandering child of Adam,—be he a Caffrarian, a Hindoo, a man of China, or a Laplander;—a beggar or a king, a rich man, a learned man, a moral man, or an abandoned wretch of christian climes.

The scheme of salvation, I regard, as offered to the *world*, as free as the light of heaven, or the rains that burst on the mountains, or the full swelling of broad rivers and streams, or the heavings of the deep. And though millions do not receive it—though in regard to them the benefits of the plan are lost, and to them, in a certain sense, the plan may be said to be in vain, yet I see in this the hand of the same God that pours the rays of noon-day on barren sands, and genial showers on desert rocks, and gives life, bubbling springs, and flowers, where no man is, to *our* eyes, yet not to *his*, *in vain*. So is the offer of eternal life, to every man here, to every man every where, sincere and full—an offer that, though it may produce no emotions in the sinner's bosom *here*, would send a thrill of joy through all the panting bosoms of the suffering damned.

III. In the presentation of this scheme, I proceed to remark, in the *third* place, that while God thus

sincerely offers the gospel to men, all mankind, while left to themselves, as sincerely and cordially reject it. It is not to any want of physical strength, that this rejection is owing; for men have power enough in themselves to *hate* both God and their fellow-men; and it requires *less* physical power to *love* God than to *hate* him; less power to love a kind and tender parent, than in the face of conscience, and motive, and law, to hate such a parent. And so with regard to a kind, and patient, and holy God. It is found that it is far easier to be reconciled to him, and love him, than to remain at war and oppose him.

It is supposed that it is an evident reflection on the Deity, of a most serious nature, to say that he has required under the penalty of eternal vengeance, that of man, which he has in no sense power to do.*

The rejection of the gospel, then, is to be traced to some cause, where man will be to blame, not God.

It is impossible for the pure gospel to have any fellowship with a scheme, which in any sense charges God with wrong. The fact that the gospel is

* This is a matter of common sense. If God requires more of men than *in any sense* they are able to perform, then, in the practical judgment of all men, according to the reason he has given them, he is unjust. That there is something which makes certain the *result* that a sinner will not, of himself, believe, is the doctrine of the New Testament. John v. 40; vi. 44.—If this be such as in all cases to put it beyond *his power* to do it, then it frees him from obligation;—if not, he may be urged still to do it. The distinction, then, between natural and moral inability referred to here, is not one of mere speculation. It enters into all preaching; and this single distinction will give a complexion to all a man's theology, and to all his efforts to save men. It will determine the character of the message he brings, and the degree of expectancy, and of course of prayer, with which he looks for the conversion of sinners. The Bible ascribes the sinner's inability to *the will* John v. 40.†The effect of conversion is on the will. Psalm cx. 3. So the Confession of Faith, while it steadily holds to these *facts* in regard to the sinner, modestly, yet closely, follows the New Testament in ascribing the whole of the difficulty to the obstinacy of the will. "Man by his fall hath wholly lost all ability of WILL; so as a natural man being altogether *averse* from that which is good, is not able, &c."—Chap. ix. iii.

rejected, is then to be traced to the obstinacy of men; to a decided, deliberate purpose *not* to be saved in this way. All men are supposed, by nature, to be insensible of the need of salvation by another. They are held to be so much opposed to God, that they *will* not submit to him. They are charged with being so much in love with sin, that neither commands nor threatenings,—neither love, nor vengeance,—neither the offer of heaven, nor the prospect of hell, will induce them to forsake it. They are so proud, that they will not stoop to receive even eternal joy as a gift. They have so high a conception of ther own merit, that neither argument nor intreaty, nor the mild voice of persuasion, will induce them to come to the arms of a bleeding Saviour.

Their hearts are so hard, their minds are so blind, that the Saviour might have prolonged his groans to the end of time, and the rocks—the hard rocks of Jerusalem, might have burst; and the firm granite of the everlasting hills been dashed to powder, but still the sinner's heart would have been unmoved by all his groans; and the race would have been giddy in pleasure, and immersed in business, and grasping honor unmoved. And, had the darkness of that unnatural night when he died, been prolonged to the present time; and had it been still whispered in every breeze, and heard in every echo, that the Son of God was *yet* suffering for men, and crying in the bitterness of a dying soul, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" still not one solitary human heart would, of itself, care that there was no sorrow like to this sorrow. From this scene the world turns in cool contempt. The plan is rejected. Man will not come to Christ that he may have life. The proof of this we need not adduce. It is found in the Saviour's personal ministry —in the fact that a nation conspired to put him to

death,—in the wide, universal rejection of the gospel since,—in the humiliating unconcern with which men listen, when

> "In strains as sweet
> As Angels use, the Gospel whispers peace,"

in the open opposition, the profane jibe, the bitter sneer, with which the multitude turn from the sufferings of Jesus.

You, who are impenitent sinners in this house, are most favorable representations, in this respect, of your fellow-rebels against heaven, in other parts of the world. May I ask what has been your treatment of the plan of salvation? From year to year, it has been pressed on your attention. Argument, entreaty, and persuasion, have been exhausted in vain. Never has the smoothness of your self-complacency been ruffled by any remorse that you have trampled on the blood of the Son of God;—never has the highness of your look been brought down by the remembrance that you have practically joined in the cry, "Crucify him, Crucify him;" never have you breathed one solitary emotion of gratitude to heaven, that Judah's rocks heard his groans, and that her mountains echoed his sighs; never have you sought his aid or felt your need of his salvation, or desired an interest in his blood. With one consent, you have turned your backs on the gospel. So have all the race—so would you, and they, to the end of time. There is such a cool indifference to it in the sinner's bosom,—or such decided contempt,—or such fixed opposition, that if it were left to itself, not a man would be saved. As the cold and putrid carcases of the dead do not of themselves seek life; as the turf would not move, nor the tomb-stones shake, nor the pale mouldering people open their eyes, *of themselves*, if I were to go and preach to yonder graves; even so it is, when I preach to sinners. Of themselves, they are

all sightless, and motionless, and fixed. They cordially reject the gospel. So it is with all the race. So it has ever been, and ever will be. Men are so wicked, that they will not be saved by a holy Redeemer, and a holy scheme.—We are prepared, then, to remark, in the

IVth place—That those who are saved, will be saved because God does it by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.—If the last point which I suggested be true, that all are disposed to reject the scheme, then it would seem to follow, that if any are saved, it will be by the special agency of God. To accomplish this, it is supposed he has sent down his Holy Spirit into the world. In the discharge of his great official work, he arrests the attention of heedless sinners. He does it by applying the preached gospel,—by leading the thoughts in a proper manner in the dispensations of his Providence,—by blessing the example and conversation of parents, brothers, and friends, or by a secret, silent influence, known only to the individual, drawing the thoughts along to eternity, producing distaste to the ways and wages of sin, and a panting and breathing of the soul for enjoyments suited to its nature. The effect of this operation of the Spirit is not to produce inactivity or slumber. It is not compulsion. No man is compelled, against his will, to be saved.* The work of salvation, and the work of damnation, are the two most deliberate and solemn acts *of choosing*, that mortal man ever performs.

The Spirit of God acts on the will. He goes *before* the convicted sinner to remove obstacles; he pours light into the mind; he impresses truth; he urges to duty. He calls up the sinners's own activity; and the guilty man, sensible now of his danger, commences the most mighty and persevering struggle in which he ever engages, that to secure

* Psalm cx. 3. Luke xv. 17, 18.

the salvation of his soul; and under the guidance of this spirit, he goes willingly and cheerfully, where he would not of himself go, to pardon and peace. There is here supposed to be no violation of freedom. In all this the sinner chooses freely. The spirit compels no one: he shuts out no one.—If the particular influence is not given to all—as no man can maintain that it is, and as the world is full of facts to shew—it is thought, that no man is injured when salvation is freely and sincerely offered to him; and when he as freely and sincerely rejects it. No being in heaven or earth, but himself, shuts him out of the blessings of redemption. The same heaven is offered,—the same Saviour died,—the same promises are made to him, and he has all the requisite power to comply. If he chooses to go to hell, after all this, no injustice will be done him: nor will he suffer beyond his deserts, if all other beings choose of themselves to be saved, or *if God chooses to save them*, and takes the glory to himself.

It is an essential part of the scheme which I am stating, that *God*, not *man*, begins the work. In the language of the Episcopal and Methodist articles of religion, the grace of Christ "*prevents*"—that is, goes *before* the sinner in his efforts to be saved. God begins the work, disposes the sinner to act, and pray, and repent, and gives him pardon. God does not himself repent, but he gives grace to man to do it for himself. That this is the true statement is clear. Man himself, as we have seen, *will* not come to Christ, that he might have life. One man has no power to produce this change in another. The Devil surely will not do a work so unlike himself, and so injurious to his kingdom. It remains, then, that it is the work of God. In the distributions of these favors, he acts by a rule that he has not made known to us. There can be no doubt that it is wise, but he has not given us the reason of it. The *fact* he

has stated, and the world, the nations past, and present, the distant tribes of men, and this place, are full of proofs that God changes, by his power, the hearts of many; and that there are many whose hearts are not changed—who choose not to be saved, and whom God has not yet chosen to renew and pardon. No man has a right to conclude, that *he* is shut out from salvation, except *by the fact.* If he loves sin, and will not repent and believe the gospel, he has no evidence that he will be saved; and if he persist in this course, he will be among the reprobate and be damned, by his own choice. If *he* should repent and believe, he would be saved, and be among the elect, and give the glory to God.*

This doctrine, that God by his spirit *prevents*, or goes before a sinner in his efforts, or commences and carries forward the work by his own power, I deem of cardinal value in the work of religion. If it be true, then it is of the utmost importance that it should be *seen* and *felt* to be true, and that the Holy Ghost should have the glory. I have no sympathy with any scheme that divides the honor with man. I have so deep a sense of the utter and total wickedness of the human heart,—of its entire opposition by nature to all that is good, and of the corruption of all its best efforts, even when aided, that I involuntarily shrink from every scheme that seems to mingle in merit the pure work of the Holy Ghost, with the crude and abortive energies of my own

* The following passages of the Bible are referred to as fully sustaining the views presented in this part of the Discourse. They are adduced here as irrefragable and everlasting proof that the Sacred Writers *meant* to teach, that God, in saving men, has a purpose; that he has mercy on whom he will have mercy; and that it is because he has chosen them that they are saved. If these passages do not prove it, it is difficult to see how they *could* have taught it. It is certainly not presented with greater clearness, or with stronger affirmations, in any Calvinistic Confession of Faith on the face of the globe. Certain it is, that when Calvinists wish to express their loftiest views of this doctrine, they are quite willing to confine themselves to the *very language* of the Bible, without any attempt to explain it away:—John xvii. 2. Eph i. 3—11. Rom. viii. 29, 30; ix. 15—24. II. Thess. ii. 13. John vi. 37, 39. II. Tim. i. 9.

bosom. I seek to ascribe, in this work, simple and undivided praises to God; to feel and proclaim to my expiring breath, that God "is first, is midst, is last, is supremest, best," in all the work of saving men; and that poor human nature, in all cases except in the person of Jesus, is to be regarded as undeserving, polluted, and meriting only death eternal.

What God *does*, he *intends* to do. There is no chance—no hap-hazard. What it is right for him to do, it is right for him to purpose to do. What he does in my salvation or yours, he always meant to do. In him is no change, no *shadow* of turning. He has no new plan. We should have no security of the salvation of an individual if he changed—no security that an act of justice would ever be done to any of the living or the dead. The welfare of the universe demands that he should have one unchanging plan, running from the beginning to the end of years; and if there is a God immutably just and holy, there must be. In that purpose, and not in *our* poor abortive plans, lies your welfare and mine.

It is no part of this scheme, as you will see, that God made men on purpose to damn them. No man, from the beginning of the world, to my knowledge, has ever professed to maintain that opinion. It is certainly not the sentiment of the Bible, and no man has any right to charge it on any system of religion; and I do not deem it too serious to say, is guilty of gross slander if he does it. God made men to glorify himself in their holiness and felicity; and has made provision for their salvation, and if they do not choose to be saved; if they choose to hate him, and rebel, and go to perdition, and HE does not choose to save them against their will, they cannot blame *him* for their self-chosen condemnation. It is an act of justice which we claim, that it should be remembered,

that neither here, nor in any christian church on the face of the earth is it held, that God made men on purpose to damn them.* If, then, God renews the heart by his Holy Spirit, if he begins and carries forward the work in all that shall be saved, and holds the power of doing this over all men, and does *not* thus incline all to come to him, and it be asked, as well it may be, why he does not renew and save all—we have only to say, that all do not *choose* to be saved, and *will* not come to him. If it be asked why the great sovereign of worlds does not *constrain* them to come, and bring all to heaven, I answer, my powers of reason here fail,—my understanding faints, and is weary; and I ask also, why he did not keep by his power men and devils from falling, and save the universe from sin and sorrow altogether?—Secret things belong to God, and I can only say as God's only Son said long since, "Even so, Father, so it seemeth good in thy sight." The christian scheme, then, claims that

* When it is affirmed here, that no denomination of Christians has maintained that God made men on purpose to damn them, it is meant that that was not the *design* or *end* for which they were created; or, that they are not condemned without any respect to their character. That many *will be lost* is believed. That God created them with an *understanding* of that fact; and understanding it, and *knowing* it, chose to create them rather than *not* to create them, cannot be denied, unless the foreknowledge of GOD be called in question. But this is a very different thing from maintaining that God had no other end in their creation but to damn them. Garbled extracts from Calvinistic writers, and quotations, *singularly made*, from the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, are sometimes resorted to, in proof of what is here denied;—but it may be safely affirmed, that not a single assertion can be found in any Calvinistic standard of doctrine, in which it is designed to be affirmed, that the intention for which God made men, was to inflict on them eternal misery, or to punish them *at all*, without respect *to character*.—Affirmations that such an opinion is held, should be slowly made; and the friends of Calvinism insist on it as a matter, not *of courtesy*, but *of right*, that the very place where the obnoxious opinion is held, should be pointed out.—The Bible affirms, that God has determined to punish men for their sin and unbelief. Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 36. Rom. ii. 5—9.—The Confession of Faith has, in this, wisely and meekly followed the Bible, and says, that "The rest of mankind God was pleased to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath FOR THEIR SIN, to the praise of his glorious justice." Chap. 3, 7. Assuredly this does not look like dooming man to hell without any respect to character.

God, by his spirit, renews all that will be saved. I remark,

V. That this is done by a change in the affections and life of man. This change has been usually called regeneration, or the new birth, or conversion. It is that revolution of character, when a man ceases to be a sinner total and unqualified, and begins to be a man of holiness. It implies a change in his views and feelings towards God, and the Saviour,—towards the truths and duties of religion,—towards christians, and a revolution in his objects and pursuits. It is not merely a love of happiness in a new form, it is a love of God and divine things, because they are good and amiable in themselves. It is instantaneous—not always indeed known at the time or precise moment, but to be tested by the new views and feelings, and especially by a holy life.—New objects are loved; new views are acted on; a new world opens to the view; and the man before selfish, becomes now benevolent; he that was vicious becomes virtuous; he that hated religion is now its friend; he that looked with cool contempt on all that could be said or done to win him, now enters heart and soul into the same work, and *wonders* that all does not see as he sees; he that sought only to live and enjoy himself here, now rises to higher objects, begins to feel that he is in the infancy of his being, and casts an eye of desire to the green fields in the skies, where he may for ever sweep the lyre in the praise of the Son of God, and unite with angels and archangels in lauding him that sitteth on the throne forever and ever.—Never was a more appropriate name given by inspired or uninspired lips, than to call such a man a new creature. He *begins* now to live. He has just awaked to the great purposes of his being, and treads with a light heart, and soft step, the earth where he shall soon sleep, and fixes the eye on the heavens that are soon to become

his home. All this is done through the merits of the Son of God, in virtue alone of his death, and in connection with two acts made indispensable by the authority of God. These high feelings, these exalted hopes, are conferred on no one who repents not of his sins, and believes not on the Son of God. The former act implies deep sorrow that God has been offended; a deep sense of the intrinsic evil of sin, as well as of its consequences; and a solemn purpose to renounce all that opposes God. The latter implies a sense of the lost condition by nature; a conviction of helplessness, and unworthiness, and a simple reliance on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, a willingness to be in the hands of a holy God, and an humble trust in the promises of aid. It is a solemn, deliberate rejection of self, and a giving up the soul to God, and a cordial hatred of sin in every form, and an embracing of the only Lord God, as the portion and Saviour of the soul. In connection with this act of believing, the sinner is pardoned and justified. A sweet sense of pardon, a peace that passeth all understanding flows into the wounded spirit. The storms subside,—the sky becomes clear and serene. A new beauty—the beauty of a new spring, where every flower and fountain, every rock and hill, every sun and star, have "found a tongue" to tell the praises of the all-present God of redemption, spreads over the works of creation and providence. And the soul redeemed and disenthralled goes forth for the first time to enjoy truly the works of creation, or the business of life, or the society of *new-found friends*.—There is a charm around the duties of religion, unfelt in all other employments; and all tell of the height and depth, and length, and breadth, of the love of Christ that passeth knowledge.

The evidence of this great change is to be sought in the life. By their fruits they shall be known.

They shall grow in grace. They shall be progressively sanctified. They, and they only, have evidence of this change who die unto sin, and live unto righteousness, who put on the Lord Jesus Christ,—are clothed with humility, crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts—who do justice, love mercy, walk humbly, and persevere unto the end.*

VI. The only other remark which I shall make in explaining our views of this scheme, is, that this salvation is complete; and that God will watch over each renewed spirit till the day of judgment, and bring it infallibly to his kingdom. We should deem it strange, if God should be at all the expense of this plan,—if he should awaken and renew a soul,—if he should sprinkle on that soul the blood of Jesus, and freely pardon all its sins, and adopt it into his family, and make it a joint heir with Christ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled,—if angels should rejoice over it, and after all in vain, and it should fall away and die forever. Such a once-pardoned sinner would, we should think, claim a rank in hell by himself.† Such a work would belie all God's other works. When has he begun a thing, and abandoned it? Why should this be begun, and then forsaken?—It is then in accordance, we suppose, with a scheme complete in all its parts,

* Matt. v. 16; vii. 16—22. James ii. 14—18. John xiv. 21. I. John ii. 3; iii. 11, 18, 19. Heb. vi. 9—12. Gal. vi. 4. I. Peter ii. 13—25. II. Peter i. 5—8. Rom. xii. Phil. iv. 8.—For some invaluable remarks on the position that a holy life is the only conclusive evidence of piety, see Edwards' "Twelfth sign of gracious affections."

† He could not inherit the doom of the common damned—for his sins have been once forgiven: perhaps two-thirds or nine-tenths of the transgressions of his whole life had been freely and fully pardoned. Or are these sins, once forgiven, again to be *re-charged* against him, and a moral agent to be punished forever for crimes which the Creator had by a solemn act, at his justification, remitted? Or if these sins are not *re-charged* upon him, then here is a being two-thirds of whose crimes, perhaps, receive neither punishment, nor permanent forgiveness. Is this judging him *according to his works?*—On either supposition, the man who had been once forgiven, and then condemned, would be unlike all other moral agents in the universe, and might assert a singular pre-eminence in hell.

that the all-seeing and all powerful Saviour said, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand:* and in accordance with the same system he will say in the day of judgment to all hypocrites and apostates, with all their pretences to experience and joy, I NEVER *knew you, depart from me.*†

It is with peculiar interest that we are permitted to proclaim that *all* that will believe, ALL, not a part, shall infallibly be saved; that God is able to keep that which you have committed to him against that day; that HE will *never* leave you, nor forsake you; that if you will come to him he will *in no wise* cast you out; that he will keep you by his mighty power through faith unto salvation; and that though you fall, you shall not be utterly cast down. *To all,* I say, if you believe the gospel. *heaven is yours.*— When you believe, you lay hold with no feeble grasp, on eternal life; and in every season of temptation and conflict, you shall find the Saviour, like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, a covert from the tempest, a hiding-place from the storm, a strong tower into which the righteous may run and be safe. A heaven of boundless felicity shall be yours; and neither the marshalled hosts of hell, nor the devices of men, nor the ten thousand foes in your own bosom, and around you, shall be

* John x. 27. 28. This single passage settles all controversy about the doctrine of falling from grace. Admitting that it had ever been the intention of Christ to teach the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, it could not have been done in more explicit language. No Confession of Faith on the globe, teaches it in a more emphatic manner; and if this does not mean to assert the doctrine, it is impossible so to torture words as to *make* them mean it.—There is, probably, no Calvinist who would not be willing to express his views on this subject always in the identical language of the Saviour. Other passages, scarcely less explicit, may be seen in the following places:—Phil. i. 6. John v. 24: vi. 37; x. 9. Rom. viii. 29, 30. Mark xvi. 16. Job xvii. 9. Psalm xxxvii. 24.

† Matt. vii. 23.

able to pluck you from him who holds you in the hollow of the hand, and guards you as the apple of the eye. The angels await your approach. They shall come forth with the glorious Son of God in the day of judgment, to welcome you to your, and their, eternal home.* With them, you shall ascend, amidst songs and loud hallelujahs, rolling sweet music o'er the skies, to your, and their, Father and God, to dwell where shall be no more sin, nor pain, nor death.

There, in the blessed bosom of the living God, the everlasting Father of his redeemed people, there, shall terminate the efforts to redeem man. There, shall be gathered a countless host from every nation and tongue, to join in one song of universal praise, to "extol *him* first, *him* midst, and *him* without end." There shall be humbled all human pride; and God only shall attract all eyes, and fill all hearts with the glories displayed in devising and executing the scheme, resulting in the ceaseless felicity of lost, ruined man.

I still ask your indulgence, while I deduce from this fruitful subject some important practical remarks.

1st. Permit me to ask of you, my hearers, are you prepared to commit the interests of your immortal souls to this plan of salvation? If I mistake not, the scheme which I have presented, is that of the Bible. If it is, it is the only way in which men can be saved. No scheme of morality, no religious device, if it has not the elements of this scheme in it, can be true or safe.† The plan that humbles man, and exalts God; that presents the great Sovereign of worlds as originating and carrying forward the scheme, is that which is presented in the Sacred Scriptures. Unless I have read the Bible, and facts to no purpose, this which I have presented contains the outlines of the scheme of truth. This

* Matt. xxv. 31. Luke xvi. 22; xv. 10.
† Acts iv. 12. Rom. ii. 12.

is the system of the Bible. This is the doctrine which, in all ages, has excited the opposition of the human heart. Herein is the offence of the cross. Here is the scheme that abases all human pride, and gives honor, where honor is due, to God only. —I may add, that this is Calvinism,—the scheme so often misrepresented,—so little understood,—so much hated by impenitent sinners—a scheme that has excited, probably, more opposition than any other system of doctrines since the foundation of the world. This scheme, if I understand it, contains nothing more than an enlargement of the principles which I have stated in this discourse.* It neither asserts, that God made men to damn them,—nor that infants will be damned,†—nor that sinners will

* It is not meant by this, that this is all that has been *represented* to be Calvinism by its foes, nor precisely all the points which have been held by some of its friends, but that it contains all the *great features* of the system that have usually been attacked as objectionable. It contains the *essence* of the system as distinguished from other systems.

† It is to be admitted, with regret, that it has been held, by a few, that infants *may be* lost. This must be conceded in regard to Dr. Gill, Dr. Twisse, and a few others. For two years past, this has been the subject of a spirited and able discussion in the "Spirit of the Pilgrims," and the "Christian Examiner." In that discussion, it has been fully proved, that it has *never* been the *common* sentiment of Calvinists; and that the sentiment is *not* held by Calvinists of the present day.—Indeed, the opinion never had any essential connection with Calvinism. It grew out of the doctrine of imputation of Adam's sin, or our *acting in him*—a sentiment as fully held, in principle, by Arminians, as it ever was by their opponents.—It is now asserted, that in no Presbyterian Church in this country is it maintained to be a fact, that infants are actually damned. An assertion that such an opinion *is* held—that it *is* maintained that "there are infants in hell not a span long," unless the cases where it has been done, are specifically and distinctly referred to, in the language of the law, is slander.—We insist, then, as a matter *of right*, that when such statements are made, the time, circumstances, and preacher, when, where, and by whom, such a doctrine was preached, be distinctly referred to, that the charge may fix responsibility, and be in some accessible form. If not done, from whatever quarter the charge may come, the author deserves an appellation which the writer of this discourse is very unwilling to apply to any person whatever.—The Confession of Faith says, on this subject, that "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved," &c. This has by some been supposed to imply, that others might be lost. The inference, however, cannot be sustained. The Authors of that Confession, *like the Sacred Writers*, were in the habit of calling all those who were saved, "the elect." They spoke of infants saved, as a *part* of the elect—a part of the race *chosen* to salvation. They affirm not, that *any* are lost; nor can it be proved that they meant to imply it.

be lost, do what they can,—nor that God is unwilling to save them,—nor that a poor penitent may not be saved; but it claims that God is full of mercy, making ample provision for all that *will* come, and inviting all freely;—that all men are full of evil, and of themselves *will* not come;—that those that are saved, are saved by the grace of God. in which he bestows his favors according to infinite wisdom. and his sovereign pleasure;—that he has no new views about it. but has always intended to do what he actually does;—and that he renews *no heart* in vain, but will keep all that are renewed, unto salvation. I appeal to your consciences, dying sinners. if this is not the scheme of the Bible? I ask not whether this is such a plan as a proud, impenitent sinner would love, or such as your unsanctified feelings would approve. but I ask. is it not the evident scheme of the Word of God? Is it not the plan on which, in fact, God governs the world?—Who in this house can gainsay, or resist it; or prove, or *believe*, that it is not?—*Not one.* I ask then, again, fellow-sinners, are you prepared to commit your eternal interests to this plan? Are you willing to be saved in this way? Are you willing to abase yourselves at the feet of the Sovereign of worlds, and to give all the honor to God? Do you feel safe in this plan; do you feel that you are lost sinners—that you deserve eternal death—that you lie at the Sovereign mercy of God—that you have no claim; and feeling this, are you willing to drop into the hands of Jesus, and to be saved by his merit alone? Do you feel, that if you are saved. it will not be by might or power of yours, but by the spirit of the Lord? And do you love this scheme? Do you seek that God should be honored in it; and do you pray and earnestly desire that it should spread wide as the world? Do you pant that all may taste the grace of God—that every in-

habitant of the lost world should join with you in the song of redeeming mercy? If these are your feelings, then you are christians. I hesitate not to hold out to you, all the consolation that a minister of Jesus can afford, and to assure you, that you are treading the narrow path that leads to life. In that strait way, moving as God directs you, you shall find indeed, here and there a thorn, or a deep ravine, or a fen, or morass; but all along the path flowers shall shed their fragrance, the ear shall listen to sweet harmony, green fields shall spread out before you, and the hope of heaven shall cheer you. To such I say, go on. Press forward. The prize, even the eternal crown, is near. Look not back; but depending on the grace of God, fix the eye on heaven, and fight manfully the fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

Of impenitent sinners, whether anxious or not, I say,

2dly, Are you prepared to reject this scheme? To your *consciences*, not to your *feelings*, for you will not love it,—to your consciences, I put it, whether this is not the scheme of the Bible? If it is, and what rebellious man here can deny it, if it is the plan of God, then you reject it at your peril. Then all your present plans, your morals, your formal prayers, your self-righteousness, your vain reliance on the unpromised mercy of God, are schemes that are abominable in the sight of your Maker; and they and you, unless you forsake them, shall be driven away like chaff before the tempest. There is but one path that leads to life. It is a path where God is honored, and the sinner humbled. In that path the sinner does not, will not tread.—Again I ask, are you prepared, fellow-mortal, to reject this scheme? I do not ask, whether you will deny it in words, for not a man dare, or can do this. But will you reject it *in fact?* Man of the world, you that

love riches and honors more than God, will you still love your riches; and in seeking your own honors, refuse to honor God? Guilty sinner, you whose profaneness, and sensuality, and envy, and pride, have rendered your heart black as hell, and miserable almost as the damned, are you prepared to reject this plan, and still love your sins?—Trembling sinner, bent under the weight of your guilt, and almost on the verge of life—you that seek salvation and have not found it, are you prepared to reject this scheme, and trust to your own merits? If you do, you do it, I repeat it, at your peril. It is your duty *now* to embrace it. Here is all your hope. If this scheme is rejected,—if you *will* not submit to God's plan of saving men,—if you do it not *now* from the heart, you tread a broad and crowded path down to the chambers of death. In that path you now go. You may be charmed with sweet sounds, and revel with the wicked, and be unwilling to turn and live, you may walk amidst flowers, and wealth, and honor, but beyond you is a dreadful hell; and as a minister of the Son of God, I proclaim, that you will soon hear the groans of the damned, and see the right arm of the God of vengeance lifted on high to cut you down in eternal death.—To this scheme set before you now, trembling mortal fly. Fly before it is too late. Fly before the day of vengeance comes, and you perish —perish for ever.

3rd. From this subject, we see what excludes men from Heaven. It is not a want of fulness, and freeness, in the plan of mercy. It is not that God is unwilling to save the sinner. It is simply because *you will not be saved.* You choose your own pride, your own vanity, your own lust, your own course in life, —the path that leads to hell. Need I repeat the assurance so often made here, and in the Sacred Scriptures, that if you are lost, it will not be be-

cause God, or the Saviour, or the Angels, or Ministers, or Christians are to blame? It will be simply because you choose death rather than life. No other being will bear the guilt but yourselves. Forever and forever, you will welter in eternal woe, bearing your guilt unpitied and alone. No other being will bear the blame. No solitary mortal or immortal can be charged with the guilt of your destruction. Nor will it be a trifling *crime* to be damned. It is not a thing which you are at liberty to choose. You have *no right* to go down to hell and become the eternal enemy of God. You are under solemn *obligations* to be saved. Think what is implied in being lost. It implies the rejection of God's plan of saving the soul—the grieving of the spirit of God—trampling on the blood of Jesus—unbelief of what the God of truth has declared—contempt of his threatenings—the love of self, of sin, of destruction. Sinner, have you *a right* to travel in this wretched path? Have you a right thus to trifle with a holy God? Have you a right to reject all the means of mercy, and deliberately sin forever, against the God that made you? I appeal to your conscience. Let me also remind you, if you go from *this* place to wo, you will inherit no common damnation. Here this amazing plan of God's mercy, has been presented again and again. Here you have been entreated in every possible way to be saved. Here God's spirit has striven. Many of you have been before awakened, and lived through revivals of religion. With great power he has, within the past three months, awed you. Others have pressed into the kingdom; and you have felt and known, that you must *repent* or *die*. You are now passing through the most solemn and interesting scenes that the earth witnesses, and listening to the most affecting appeals that he makes, unmoved. Who will be to blame, if you are lost,—if others are taken, and

you are left? Will God? Will Christians? Will ministers? Will parents? Will friends? or will you yourselves? Let conscience answer. Go home this day, impenitent sinner, if God spares a rebel like you to get home—go home and reflect, that if you pass through this revival unmoved, if you resist all the appeals that are made to you, from day to day, and week to week, the probability is, that you will be damned,—and the certainty is, that *you* only will be to blame if you are. I do not say that you will *certainly* be lost, I say that a most fearful probability "thunders perdition on your guilty path."—What *should* move you hereafter, if you are not now moved? What more can be done for you than has been done? You have been warned, entreated, impressed. You *know* your duty, and your doom, if you do it not. You are in the hands of a Sovereign God. There I leave you. I have no other power than to spread out the scheme of mercy—to entreat you by the love of Jesus, and the mercy of God, and the value of the soul, to embrace the offer of life; and if you *will perish*, I must sit down and weep as I see you glide to the lake of death. Yet I cannot see you take that dread plunge—see you die, die forever, without once more assuring you that the offer of the gospel is freely made to you. While you linger this side the fatal verge, that shall close life and hope and happiness, I would once more lift up my voice and say, See, Sinner, see a God of love. He comes to you. He fills the heaven, the skies, the earth. Hear his voice as it breaks on the stillness of this house. Listen to the accents of the ever-living God—"As I live I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he turn and live: turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"—In the hands of that present God, that benignant Father, whose mercy breathes from every page of this book, I leave you. To him I

commend you, with the deep feeling in my own bosom, that you are in his hands; that you are solemnly bound to repent *to-day*, and believe the gospel, and that if you perish, you only will be to blame. I feel, and know, that for not repenting, you have no excuse, and that God will forever hold you guilty.

I also feel, and know, that God is under no obligation to save you. That if you die, he will be guiltless. That if you are saved, it will be by his sovereign mercy—in such a way, that he only will have the praise; and that the great secret, whether you will live or die, is lodged in his bosom, and that no mortal can compel or control him. That he holds over you the sceptre of life, or the sword of death; and that if you die, all creation will bow and say Amen, and Amen.

We also feel, and know, that God *can* save you—that he hears prayer. We will bear you, then, before the throne of grace, and say—Sovereign of worlds, Arbiter of life and death, spare this people, and save these dying sinners. "Oh, most holy, blessed, and merciful Saviour, deliver them not into the bitter pains of eternal death!" AMEN.